

6.0 ALTERNATIVES TO THE PROPOSED PROJECT

As stated in the CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6, project alternatives selected for analysis are those alternatives capable of eliminating or reducing to a level of insignificance, one or more of the significant adverse environmental effects of the project as proposed. Alternatives were selected based on feasibility and ability to meet basic project objectives. Project alternatives were not rejected based on their likelihood to slightly impede the attainment of the project objectives or their likelihood to be more costly than the proposed project.

6.1 Project Alternatives

Two build alternatives and the no project alternative are under consideration and have been included in the following discussion.

6.1.1 No Project Alternative

CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(e) requires every EIR to include a “No Project Alternative.” “The purpose of describing and analyzing a No Project Alternative is to allow decision makers to compare impacts of approving the proposed project with the impacts of not approving the proposed project. The “no project” analysis shall discuss the existing conditions at the time the notice of preparation is published . . . as well as what would be reasonably expected to occur in the foreseeable future if the project were not approved, based on current plans and consistent with available infrastructure and community services.”

“If the project is . . . a development project on identifiable property, the “no project” alternative is the circumstance under which the project does not proceed. Here the discussion would compare the environmental effects of the property remaining in its existing state against environmental effects which would occur if the project is approved. If disapproval of the project under consideration would result in predictable actions by others, such as the proposal of some other project, this “no project” consequence should be discussed. In certain instances, the No Project Alternative means “no build” wherein the existing environmental setting is maintained. However, where failure to proceed with the project will not result in preservation of existing environmental conditions, the analysis should identify the practical results of the project’s non-approval and not create and analyze a set of artificial assumptions that would be required to preserve the existing physical environment.”

6.1.2 Whisper Creek Subdivision with Easement for Don Julio Boulevard Extension Alternative

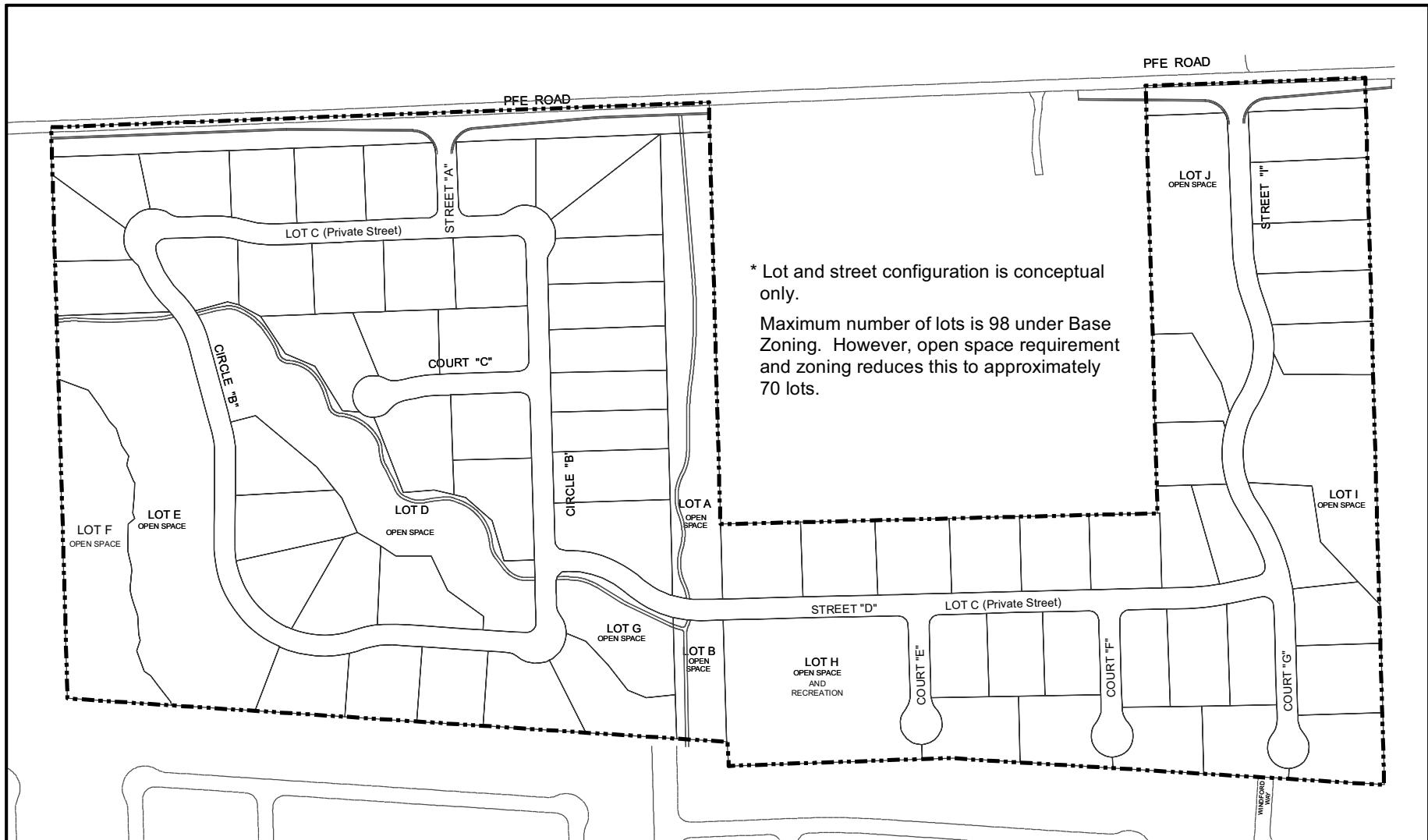
This Alternative is identical to the Proposed Project except that the easement currently reserved for the future extension of Don Julio Boulevard (and planned for removal in the Proposed Project) would remain available for the potential boulevard extension. As part of this alternative, an amendment to the Placer County Dry Creek-West Placer Community Plan would not be required. The future extension of Don Julio Boulevard would remain included in the Dry Creek/West Placer Community Plan as it currently does and would remain in the planned future circulation system of Placer County.

This alternative proposes the development of a 104 lot single-family residential subdivision on Assessors Parcel Nos. 023-260-002, 006, 007, and 017. The project involves the subdivision of 60.6± acres into 104 single-family residential lots, eight open space lots, one recreation lot, and a private street lot. As with the Proposed Project, this alternative would require approval of a conditional use permit and a tentative subdivision map. The site is currently zoned RS-AG-B-X-20-PD 2.0 and O-PD2 and this alternative would meet the existing zoning designation.

6.1.3 Base Zoning Alternative with Removal of the Don Julio Boulevard Extension Easement

This alternative is similar to the proposed project in many details. As with the Proposed Project, Placer County would propose an amendment to the Dry Creek-West Placer Community Plan that would eliminate the Irrevocable Offer of Dedication (I.O.D.) that currently exists through the project site for the future extension of Don Julio Boulevard from the Sacramento County line to PFE Road. However, instead of 104 single-family residences, this alternative would provide for the construction of approximately 70 single-family residences after the designated open space and streets are taken into consideration. The resulting density of development would be approximately two units per buildable acre, which is the minimum density in the range of development densities permitted under the Low Density Residential designation in the Dry-Creek/West Placer Community Plan.

Under this alternative, it is assumed that the single-family residences would be constructed on lots approximately 20,000 square feet in size. Figure 6.1-1 shows a conceptual diagram of the proposed base zoning alternative.



BASE ZONING ALTERNATIVE*

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0 250 500
SCALE IN FEET

Drawn By: AH
Date: 03/15/06

FIGURE 6.1-1

6.2 Ability to Meet Stated Project Objectives

The Whisper Creek Subdivision with Easement for Don Julio Boulevard Extension Alternative would meet all three of the project objectives described in Section 2.3 of this EIR.

1. This alternative would increase housing supply in Western Placer County;
2. This alternative would be consistent with the land use designations of the Placer County General Plan and Dry Creek-West Placer Community Plan; and
3. This alternative would construct infrastructure improvements including roadway, sewer service, and water service necessary to support the development of the project.

The Base Zoning Alternative with Removal of the Don Julio Extension Easement would meet all three of the project objectives described in Section 2.3 of this EIR.

1. This alternative would increase housing supply in Western Placer County;
2. This alternative would be consistent with the land use designations of the Placer County General Plan and Dry Creek-West Placer Community Plan; and
3. This alternative would construct infrastructure improvements including roadway, sewer service, and water service necessary to support the development of the project.

The No Project Alternative would not meet any of the project objectives described in Section 2.3 of this EIR.

1. This alternative would not contribute to the housing supply in Western Placer County. This lack of additional housing would hinder the County's ability to meet its housing goals, which call for providing additional housing to meet the needs of a growing population in unincorporated Placer County.
2. This alternative would not be consistent with the land use designations of the Placer County General Plan and Dry Creek-West Placer Community Plan. The minimum density in the range of development densities permitted under the Low Density Residential designation in the Dry-Creek/West Placer Community Plan would be approximately two units per acre.
3. This alternative would not provide infrastructure improvements (i.e., roadway, sewer service, and water service) necessary to support the development of the subdivision project. A maximum of four single-family residential units (developable by right) could be constructed on the $60.6\pm$ acre Project Site under the No Project Alternative. Additional infrastructure improvements would not be required.

6.3 Compare Environmental Superiority

CEQA requires that if the No Project Alternative is the environmentally superior alternative, then the EIR must state the next most environmentally superior alternative as well. Table 6.3-1 provides a comparison of alternatives to the proposed project in addition to the No Project Alternative (see Section 6.1.1).

The Base Zone Alternative with Removal of the Don Julio Boulevard Extension Easement (see Section 6.1.3) would result in fewer impacts to land use, aesthetics, transportation/traffic, air quality, hydrology/water quality, and public services and utilities than the proposed project. This Alternative would eliminate the incompatibility with neighboring land uses. One of the Community Plan's goals is to "encourage compatibility between neighboring land uses". The two adjacent lots immediately to the north of the Project Site's boundary are zoned residential RS-AG-B-20 (single-family, agriculture combining district, building site combining district , minimum 20,000 square foot building site) which requires a minimum lot size of 20,000 square feet. The development of 20,000 square foot parcels adjacent to the residential RS-AG-B-20 development would be considered compatible. Although impacts to aesthetics would be similar to the proposed project, approximately 34 fewer residences would be constructed under this alternative resulting in fewer impacts to aesthetics (e.g., rural residential/agricultural character, light and glare, etc.). Although not considered to be a significant reduction, this alternative would generate fewer vehicle trips due to the construction of 34 fewer residences from the proposed project. Long-term emissions associated with the Base Zone Alternative with the Removal of the Don Julio Boulevard Easement would be substantially reduced from the Proposed Project due to the construction of 34 fewer residences. Fewer impacts to hydrology and water quality would occur as a result of the elimination of a significant amount of impervious surface area due to the lower density of housing. In addition, there would be less demand for public services and utilities with the development of 70 residences versus 104.

Impacts associated with the Whisper Creek Subdivision with Easement for Don Julio Boulevard Extension Alternative (see Section 6.1.2) would result in similar impacts to the Proposed Project with the exception of transportation/traffic. The LOS for the intersection of Pinehurst Drive at PFE Road would be impacted by the proposed project under future (Year 2025) conditions. The LOS would be reduced from an already unacceptable LOS D to E for the a.m. peak hour, and would remain at an unacceptable LOS F for the p.m. peak hour with a 10 second increase in delay. Although the LOS would be unacceptable, no increase in delay would occur at the intersection of Antelope North Road and PFE Road as would occur under the Proposed Project. Therefore, the Base Zoning Alternative with Removal of the Don Julio Boulevard Extension Easement is considered to be the environmentally superior alternative after the No Project Alternative.

6.0 Alternatives to the Proposed Project

Table 6.3-1 — Alternatives Analysis

Proposed Project	Whisper Creek Subdivision with Easement for Don Julio Boulevard Extension Alternative	Base Zoning Alternative with Removal of the Don Julio Boulevard Extension Easement	No-Project Alternative
Land Use	See discussion under Proposed Project.	<p>The proposed project would result in higher density residential development than the adjoining rural residential lots adjacent to the project's northern boundary. One of the Community Plan's goals is to "encourage compatibility between neighboring land uses." The two adjacent lots immediately to the north of the Project Site's boundary are zoned RS-AG-B-20 which requires a minimum building site of 20,000 square feet. This incompatibility is considered potentially significant. Mitigation measures would reduce impacts to below a level of significance.</p>	<p>The base zoning allowing for 20,000 square foot minimum lot sizes would be retained. This would allow for the development of approximately 70 single-family residences rather than 104 under the proposed project. The development would be consistent with the two adjacent parcels located immediately north of the Project Site. No land use impacts are anticipated. No mitigation would be required.</p> <p>Under the No Project Alternative, the existing Low Density Residential zoning designation would be retained and the four existing parcels would not be subdivided into the proposed 104 lots. No significant land use impacts are anticipated under the No Project Alternative. In addition, the proposed Placer County amendment to the Dry Creek-West Placer Community Plan would not occur. The Irrevocable Offer of Dedication (I.O.D.) that currently exists through the project site for the future extension of Don Julio Boulevard from the Sacramento County line to PFE Road would be retained.</p>
Population Employment and Housing	See discussion under Proposed Project. ⁴⁵	<p>The proposed project would increase the supply of available housing in the project area through the construction of 104 new single-family residential lots and homes. This additional housing would assist the County in meeting its housing goals, which call for providing additional housing to meet the needs of a growing population in unincorporated Placer County.</p>	<p>The Base Zoning Alternative would only allow for the development of approximately 70 lots within the ±60.6 acre Project Site. The addition of 70 new single-family residences would assist the County in meeting its housing goals, which call for providing additional housing to meet the needs of a growing population in unincorporated Placer County.</p> <p>Under the No Project Alternative, the proposed 104 single-family residential lots and homes would not be developed. However, the development of a single-family residence with accessory structures could occur on each of the four existing parcels (Assessor's Parcel Numbers 023-260-002, 006, 007, and 017). This lack of additional housing would hinder the County in meeting its housing goals, which call for providing additional housing to meet the needs of a growing population in unincorporated Placer County. This</p>

6.0 Alternatives to the Proposed Project

Proposed Project	Whisper Creek Subdivision with Easement for Don Julio Boulevard Extension Alternative	Base Zoning Alternative with Removal of the Don Julio Boulevard Extension Easement	No-Project Alternative
Aesthetics	<p>The proposed project would substantially degrade the existing visual character and quality of the site and the surroundings. In addition to the construction of 104 residences, earthen berms would also be constructed along PFE road to mitigate significant noise impacts. The project would create a new source of substantial light that would adversely affect nighttime views in the area. Impacts would be considered significant. The implementation of mitigation measures would reduce impacts to below a level of significance.</p>	<p>See discussion under Proposed Project.</p> <p>Impacts would be similar to the proposed project. Approximately 34 fewer residences would be constructed on the ±60.6 acre Project Site resulting in a reduced impact on aesthetic resources. However, impacts would still be considered significant. As with the proposed project, a new source of substantial light may adversely affect nighttime views in the area. Impacts would be considered significant. The implementation of mitigation measures would reduce impacts to below a level of significance.</p>	<p>Under the No Project Alternative, alteration of views of the project area from surrounding roadways and properties from its present rural residential/ agricultural character to an urbanized character would not occur. However, the development of a single-family residence with accessory structures could occur on each of the four existing parcels (Assessor's Parcel Numbers 023-260-002, 006, 007, and 017). No adverse impacts to light and glare would occur. No significant impacts are anticipated.</p>
Transportation/Traffic			<p>Under the No Project Alternative (Existing), all of the study area intersections would operate at LOS B during the a.m. and p.m. peak hour with the exception of Walerga Road at PFE Road and Walerga Road at Elverta Road. The Walerga Road/PFE Road intersection would operate at LOS C during the p.m. peak hour. The Walerga Road/Elverta Road intersection would operate at LOS C during the a.m. peak hour. Under the No Project Alternative (Year 2025), seven study area intersections would operate at acceptable LOS C or better during both the a.m. and p.m. peak hours. Although the intersection of Antelope North Road at PFE Road would operate at unacceptable LOS F during the a.m. and p.m. peak hours under Future (Year 2025) conditions. Because the intersection would operate at an</p> <p>Under existing conditions with Project, all seven intersections would operate at an acceptable LOS C or better during both the a.m. and p.m. peak hours as with the Proposed Project. Under the Future (Year 2025) with Project conditions, eight intersections would operate at an acceptable LOS C for both the a.m. and p.m. peak hours. The Antelope North Road/PFE Road intersection would operate at unacceptable LOS F during both the a.m. peak hour and the p.m. peak hours, and the Walerga Road/Elverta</p>

6.0 Alternatives to the Proposed Project

Proposed Project	Whisper Creek Subdivision with Easement for Don Julio Boulevard Extension Alternative	Base Zoning Alternative with Removal of the Don Julio Boulevard Extension Easement	No-Project Alternative
<p>Road intersection would operate at LOS D during the a.m. peak hour and LOS E during the p.m. peak hour. LOS E is considered an acceptable level of service in the County of Sacramento. Under Future (Year 2025) conditions with the project, there would be a significant change in the average intersection delay only at the intersection of Antelope North Road and PFE Road within the project area for both the a.m. and p.m. peak hours. The implementation of mitigation measures would reduce impacts to below a level of significance.</p>	<p>increase in delay would occur as a result of project implementation. The LOS at the intersection of Finchurst Drive at PFE Road would be impacted by the proposed project. The LOS would be reduced from an already unacceptable LOS D to E for the a.m. peak hour, and would remain at an unacceptable LOS F for the p.m. peak hour with a 10 second increase in delay. Mitigation for impacts would include modifying the westbound and eastbound approaches to the intersection, or installing a roundabout. Mitigation would reduce significant impacts to below a level of significance.</p>	<p>unacceptable LOS, this impact is considered significant. The implementation of mitigation measures would reduce impacts to below a level of significance.</p>	<p>during the a.m. peak hour, and six study intersections would operate at acceptable LOS C or better during the p.m. peak hour. The Antelope North Road/PFE Road intersection would operate at unacceptable LOS F during both the a.m. peak hour and the p.m. peak hour, and the Don Julio Boulevard/PFE Road intersection would operate at unacceptable LOS F during the p.m. peak hour. Although these intersections would fail under Year 2025 conditions, no significant traffic impacts would occur under the No Project Alternative.</p>
	Air Quality	See discussion under Proposed Project.	<p>Under the Base Zoning Alternative, construction impacts would be similar to the proposed project. Grading of approximately ± 45 acres of the ± 60.6 acre site would be required as under the proposed project. Long-term emissions associated with this alternative would be substantially reduced from the proposed project. However, long-term impacts would still exceed the PCAPCD thresholds of significance. Impacts would be considered less than significant with mitigation with the exception of the NOx emissions from site grading. These emissions are considered to be significant and unavoidable.</p>

6.0 Alternatives to the Proposed Project

Proposed Project	Whisper Creek Subdivision with Easement for Don Julio Boulevard Extension Alternative	Base Zoning Alternative with Removal of the Don Julio Boulevard Extension Easement	No-Project Alternative
site grading. These emissions are considered to be significant and unavoidable.			
Noise	<p>Construction activities may result in short-term noise levels that exceed the thresholds established in the Placer County General Plan and Noise Ordinance (Placer County Code, Article 9.36). However, construction-related noise impacts that exceed adopted noise level standards are exempt, provided they do not occur outside of specified operating hours. Construction noise exceeding adopted standards and occurring outside of the hours specified in the General Plan, the Dry Creek-West Placer Community Plan, and the Noise Ordinance or the Placer County Code would be considered a significant noise impact. Mitigation measures would reduce this impact to a less than significant level. Under both the Existing Conditions Future (year 2025) with scenarios, noise levels are expected to exceed the Placer County exterior noise level standard. Mitigation would reduce impacts to below a level of significance.</p>	<p>See discussion under Proposed Project.</p> <p>Short-term construction noise impacts would be similar to those of the proposed project. Construction noise exceeding adopted standards and occurring outside of the hours specified in the General Plan, the Dry Creek-West Placer Community Plan, and the Noise Ordinance or the Placer County Code would not occur under the No Project Alternative. Existing traffic noise generated by traffic on both Walerga and PFE roads would continue. No significant impacts are anticipated.</p>	
Biological Resources	<p>The proposed project may have a significant adverse effect on oak trees, riparian habitat or other sensitive</p>	<p>See discussion under Proposed Project.</p>	<p>Under the Base Zoning Alternative, impacts to biological resources would be the same as the proposed project.</p> <p>Under the No Project Alternative, no significant adverse impacts to biological resources would occur.</p>

6.0 Alternatives to the Proposed Project

Proposed Project	Whisper Creek Subdivision with Easement for Don Julio Boulevard Extension Alternative	Base Zoning Alternative with Removal of the Don Julio Boulevard Extension Easement	No-Project Alternative
<p>natural communities identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations, by the California Department of Fish and Game, and/or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The proposed project would conflict with the Placer County Tree Preservation Ordinance and the Dry Creek-West Placer Community Plan through the removal of oak trees and their associated understory. The proposed project would have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption or other means. Potentially significant impacts to foraging and nesting habitat for raptor species may occur. Potential nesting trees for raptors occur on site and adjacent to the project area, and foraging and nesting habitat for raptors occurs within and adjacent to the site. Potential impacts to the Swainson's hawk, western burrowing owl and migratory birds may also occur. The implementation of mitigation measures would reduce impacts to below a level of significance.</p>	<p>Grading of approximately ±45 acres of the ±60.6 acre site would be required as under the proposed project. The implementation of mitigation measures would reduce impacts to below a level of significance.</p>	<p>Continued maintenance (e.g., weed abatement, discing, etc.) would continue. The potential development of four single-family residences and associated accessory structures could potentially impact biological resources. However, adverse impacts could be avoided through the proper siting of structures.</p>	
			<p>Cultural Resources</p> <p>A potentially significant impact could occur if previously undiscovered cultural resources are inadvertently exposed during grading and excavation activities. The project may also cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource (e.g., impacts to</p>

6.0 Alternatives to the Proposed Project

Proposed Project	Whisper Creek Subdivision with Easement for Don Julio Boulevard Extension Alternative	Base Zoning Alternative with Removal of the Don Julio Boulevard Extension Easement	No-Project Alternative
inadvertently discovered historical resources). Impacts may also occur to inadvertently exposed paleontological resources during construction. The implementation of mitigation measures would reduce impacts to below a level of significance.	of significance.	anticipated.	
Geology/Soils/Minerals	See discussion under Proposed Project.	Under the Base Zoning Alternative, impacts to geology/soil/mineral resources would be the same as the proposed project. Grading of approximately ±45 acres of the ±60.6 acre site would be required as under the proposed project. The implementation of mitigation measures would reduce impacts to below a level of significance.	Under the No Project Alternative, no substantial grading would occur, leading to potential ground instability and erosion. However, minor ground disturbance may occur due to ongoing maintenance activities such as discing or weed abatement. In addition, minor grading would occur during the potential construction of four single-family residences allowed by right. No significant impacts are anticipated.
Hazards & Hazardous Materials	See discussion under Proposed Project.	Under the Base Zoning Alternative, impacts associated with hazards and hazardous materials would be the same as those identified for the proposed project. Grading of approximately ±45 acres of the ±60.6 acre site would be required as under the proposed project. The implementation of mitigation measures would reduce impacts to below a level of significance.	Under the No Project Alternative, no adverse impacts associated with hazards or hazardous materials would occur.
Hydrology/Water Quality	Development of the proposed project would increase the amount of	See discussion under Proposed Project.	Under the Base Zoning Alternative, impacts to hydrology/water quality
			Under the No Project Alternative, no grading or development would occur

6.0 Alternatives to the Proposed Project

Proposed Project	Whisper Creek Subdivision with Easement for Don Julio Boulevard Extension Alternative	Base Zoning Alternative with Removal of the Don Julio Boulevard Extension Easement	No-Project Alternative
	<p>impervious surfaces through the construction of residences and roadways, which would increase the rate and volume of storm water runoff. Storm water runoff from the proposed project could potentially contain urban contaminants that could degrade water quality. Grading, excavation, and construction activities associated with the proposed project could potentially degrade water quality and increase deposition of sediment in Dry Creek. The implementation of mitigation measures would reduce impacts to below a level of significance.</p>	<p>would be similar to the proposed project. Grading of approximately +45 acres of the ±60.6 acre site would be required as under the proposed project. Less impervious surface area would be constructed, resulting in the generation of measurably less storm water runoff. Impacts would be considered significant. The implementation of mitigation measures would reduce impacts to below a level of significance.</p>	<p>as under the proposed project. Therefore, no substantial increase in impervious surfaces through the construction of residences and roadways would occur. As a result, no substantial increase in the rate and volume of storm water runoff is expected. No significant impacts are anticipated.</p>
		<p>Public Services and Utilities</p> <p>The proposed project would result in increased demand for the following: treated surface water; the conveyance of sewage to the wastewater treatment plant; and for public schools. The implementation of mitigation measures would reduce impacts to below a level of significance.</p>	<p>Under the Base Zoning Alternative, the development of 70 residential lots would require an increased demand for public services and utilities as for the proposed project. The implementation of mitigation measures would reduce impacts to below a level of significance.</p>
		<p>Recreation</p> <p>No adverse impacts to parks and recreation would occur as a result of project implementation.</p>	<p>No adverse impacts to parks and recreation would occur under the Base Zoning Alternative.</p> <p>Under the No Project Alternative, no development beyond four single-family residences would occur; and therefore, no increase in demand for parks and recreation areas would occur.</p> <p>No significant impacts are anticipated.</p>

6.0 Alternatives to the Proposed Project

Proposed Project	Whisper Creek Subdivision with Easement for Don Julio Boulevard Extension Alternative	Base Zoning Alternative with Removal of the Don Julio Boulevard Extension Easement	No-Project Alternative
Cumulative Impacts			
The other projects in the region represent the development of tens of thousands of new residences and the urbanization of over 15,000 acres. When considered along with these other projects, and when implementing the mitigation for cumulative air quality impacts, the individual impacts of the proposed Silver Creek project with 104 dwelling units on ±60.6 acres become cumulatively insignificant.	See discussion under Proposed Project.	The other projects in the region represent the development of tens of thousands of new residences and the urbanization of over 15,000 acres. When considered along with these other projects, and when implementing the mitigation for cumulative air quality impacts listed above, the individual impacts of the proposed Whisper Creek project with 70 dwelling units on ±60.6 acres become cumulatively insignificant.	Under the no-project alternative, retention of the existing conditions within the project area would continue. No cumulative impacts would occur.